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## **Chapter 1: Why the nation? Theories of nationalism**

Can any one theory explain nationalism? What are the differences between today's nationalisms and nineteenth and twentieth century nationalisms?

Definitions of the nation are necessarily linked to different theoretical approaches that attempt to explain nationalism. Theories of nationalism have tended to revolve around the issue of origins, principally through the long-standing academic debate between so-called primordialist, ethno-symbolist and modernist scholars, which turns on the question of how we can date nations and explain how they came about. This controversy is only of indirect relevance here, as the present text is more concerned with how existing nation-states and nationalist movements respond to current challenges. Nonetheless, the question of origins does matter to how nationalists and nation-builders define their respective nations. The point at issue has been summed up as 'do nations have navels?' (Gellner 1996). In other words, were they born of some pre-existing entity, such as an ethnic group, or were they new creations brought about by a unique concatenation of events? Did they spring from the European industrial revolution of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Gellner 1964, 1983), the exploitation of print technologies by dissatisfied, colonised intelligentsia (Anderson 1991), or the evolution of a form of 'proto-nationalism' from the medieval period onwards (Greenfeld 1993, Llobera 1994)? The first section of the chapter examines the (limited) usefulness of established theories of nationalism for explaining contemporary nationalism.

The second section of the chapter goes on to look at some theoretical approaches to contemporary nationalism. So-called 'neo-nationalisms' (McCrone 1998) are shown to be adaptable in articulating the link between the individual and the collective in the pursuit of legitimacy. The discussion looks at how contemporary nationalisms are different to nineteenth century forms, in order better to understand their response to twenty-first century challenges. The chapter's final section then turns to post-colonial theory, and its impact on nationalist ideology. By the nineteenth century, a large

proportion of the globe was under European imperial domination by the nineteenth century, with colonial powers only gradually withdrawing between the end of World War I and as late as 1980 for the likes of Zimbabwe (and 1990 for Namibia, controlled by Germany and then South Africa). It is therefore important to investigate colonialism's lasting impact on nationalism in successor states, not only in former colonies, but also former colonising powers. The evolution of post-war attitudes towards British citizenship and identity, for instance, had much to do with migrants arriving in the United Kingdom from the Commonwealth. The chapter concludes that contemporary nationalisms do indeed differ from older variants, and not least because of their need to respond to the cosmopolitan challenge. Nevertheless, nationalist ideologues continue to mobilise followers using appeals to primordial symbols or claims to represent an ancient nation, and demand recognition on that basis. This, in turn, can affect their relative openness to newcomers, or their protectiveness of traditions. The nation's putative origins therefore continue to be relevant to contemporary nationalist ideology.

## **I Theories of Nationalism**

One ongoing debate within nationalism theory divides ethno-symbolist and modernist scholars. It confronts the claim that nations are rooted in some ancient *ethnie*, symbolic or otherwise, with the contention that nations are a product of the last two centuries of modernisation (cf. Hutchinson & Smith 1996, 40-56). Another key debate juxtaposes ethnic and civic variants of nationalism, and tends to depict them as irreconcilable opposites. In this instance, discussed further in chapters two and five, a form of nationalism based on exclusive criteria of belonging such as language, religion or blood is contrasted with a nation defined according to state citizenship. These two sets of perspectives, although having the merit of clarity, very much over-simplify possible approaches to explaining and classifying nationalisms. Consequently, the pairings are most usefully seen as labels denoting end points on a scale, rather than as strict dichotomies (Brown 1999, 300). Most scholars would not situate themselves at either pole of these discussions. For instance, in the celebrated debate entitled 'Do nations have navels?' which

pitted the 'ethno-symbolist' Anthony Smith against the 'modernist' Ernest Gellner, each made considerable concessions to the other's position (Gellner 1996, 90).

This section briefly surveys some explanatory theories of nationalism in order to evaluate their relevance to contemporary nationalism and its responses to the cosmopolitan challenge. They are discussed at much greater length in Kellas (1991), Hutchinson (1994), Özkirimli (2000), Lawrence (2005), Ichijo and Uzelac (2005) and Delanty and Kumar (2006) among others. In attempting to account for the rise of nationalism, each theory emphasises different factors as crucial. Michael Mann, for instance, points to the importance of nationalism as a means of mobilising men to aliment the military machines of nineteenth-century states (1993). Benedict Anderson (1991) highlights the influence of what he calls 'print capitalism', understood as the ever-more rapid and wide dissemination of the printed word, in fostering a sense of shared national identity amongst the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie. Miroslav Hroch (1985) depicts intellectual elites as the force fuelling the growth of national consciousness, dividing the process of nationalist mobilisation into phases, in which first intellectuals, then the bourgeoisie and finally the masses throw their weight behind a political project.

Ernest Gellner (1964, 1983, 1994), who ranks as one of the most influential modernist theorists, characterised nineteenth century European nationalism as a response to the dislocation brought on by the uneven development of industrialisation and urbanisation. He claimed that, by being uprooted from their homes and thrown together in unfamiliar urban surroundings, people were forced to reassess their loyalties in order to recreate a sense of belonging, and did so by identifying with national constructs. Nationalist ideology also had strong mobilising potential among those disappointed by the promise of social mobility and equality in the new urban centres. That is, a frustrated intelligentsia would strive to create its own national arena in which to exercise the power it had been denied under imperial or aristocratic rule. In turn, Gellner's much-quoted aphorism, "every man is a clerk", referred to a

concomitant spread of education in local languages, which helped to foster mass participation in these newly-configured nations (Gellner 1964, 159). The present text's focus on nationalist ideology shares Gellner's concern with elite constructions of the nation, rather than their mass dissemination and consumption. However, contemporary nationalism evolves in very different circumstances to the nineteenth century European context which Gellner described.

Alongside that of John Armstrong (1982), Walker Connor (1994) and Josep Llobera (1994) among others, the work of Anthony D. Smith has a strong focus on ethnicity as a precursor and foundation of the nation. Smith, who describes his own approach as 'ethno-symbolist', asserts the existence of pre-modern *ethnies* and contends that modern states have been built around ethnic communities. He uses the term *ethnie* to mean "a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories and one or more common elements of culture, including an association with a homeland, and some degree of solidarity, at least among elites" (Smith 1991, 13). According to Smith, the development of a nation from an *ethnie* is equivalent to the transition from a passive community to an active, organised and assertive one; "We are not talking here about actual descent, much less about race, but about the *senses* of ancestry and identity that people possess" (Smith 1986, 150, emphasis in original). Walker Connor's (1994, 75) definition of the nation as "a group of people characterized by a myth of common descent" supports Smith's view. These scholars do not dispute that nationalists make selective readings of the past, but argue that the selection must take place within limits set by pre-existing myths, symbols, customs and memories (Smith 1986, 154).

A.D. Smith (1981, 90) has sought to marry his 'ethno-symbolist' approach with a theory of 'ethnic historicism'. This posits an elite in search of a political arena, which they set out to create through the historical derivation of an age-old nation. Like Elie Kedourie and Ernest Gellner before him, Smith has emphasised the central role played by an ambitious and frustrated educated elite in fostering nationalist movements, linking the emergence of secular

intellectuals to a rejection of religion and the growing popularity of evolutionary theories of human development. Influenced by the rationalism of the Enlightenment, but rebelling against its universalising tendencies, these secular intellectuals found themselves in conflict with the Church and other traditional authorities, who feared for their own legitimacy. Asserting a nation's ancient origins, in turn, was designed to burnish its credentials as an alternative source of legitimacy (Smith 1981, 102). According to Smith (1981, 87), nationalist elites variously chose what he calls a neo-traditionalist, assimilationist or reformist route, but all uncovered "submerged ethnic ties and sentiments," judged to be essential in shaping every nationalist movement. Simply put, ethnic historicism describes a search for identity, one founded on a remote point in time and a myth of common ancestry.

Despite the sophistication of some of the theories outlined above, they are for the most part deterministic and universalistic, as they purport to find their favoured factors at the root of *all* nationalist movements. For example, Gellner (1983, 39) asserts that "a homogeneity imposed by objective, inescapable imperative eventually appears on the surface in the form of nationalism." Although Gellner did divide nationalism's different manifestations into geographical and historical zones, these categories describe very general processes and are of limited applicability to specific cases. For instance, he divided Europe into four historical time zones, describing the Atlantic seacoast zone, for one, as based on strong dynastic states (Gellner 1994). Critics of Gellner also accuse him of being both ahistorical and apolitical in underestimating the reach and influence of nationalism as a political doctrine (O'Leary 1996, 110). Similarly, Liah Greenfeld (1993) accuses Gellner of ignoring the historical contingency of many nationalist phenomena. Greenfeld herself, on the other hand, charts the rise of English nationalism, among others, *before* the advent of industrialisation, which Gellner takes as his starting point. Yet at the same time as acknowledging the huge variation in nationalist movements according to their situational constraints, Greenfeld also proposes a universal explanatory model of nationalism based on an identity crisis, or anomie, of the relevant social actors (Greenfeld 1993, 14-17).

Like Gellner, Elie Kedourie (1966) is also a modernist. Contrary to Gellner, however, Kedourie concentrates on the history of nationalism as an idea. To this extent, he shares the present text's focus on ideology. Kedourie offers a detailed account of the philosophical roots and development of nationalism, discussing its ideological links with left and right, liberalism, democracy and civil rights. He also discusses the social standing of nineteenth century European ideologues such as Johann Gottfried Herder and Giuseppe Mazzini, and throws light on the professional frustration, political inexperience and intellectual idealism motivating their writing. Kedourie's argument is that such men initially shaped nationalist politics, but that later figures like Hitler, Stalin and Lenin were responsible for distorting and debasing sophisticated intellectual debate. Kedourie also tends to see nationalism's chauvinistic, German and ethnic form as its archetype, leading him to conclude that "nationalism is unknown" (Kedourie 1966, 143) in the likes of Great Britain and the U.S. This analysis differs starkly from that of the present text, which considers both banal nation-building and 'hot' nationalism – as discussed in chapter two - to be variants of the same core ideological principle of prioritising the nation.

Paul Brass (1991), like Kedourie, also emphasises nationalism's ideological nature. Like A.D. Smith and Gellner too, he highlights the importance of elites in shaping and propagating nationalist ideas. Brass (1991, 13) argues that elite competition, rather than ethnic identity *per se*, constitutes the basic dynamic of ethnic conflict. He underlines the importance of the political and economic environment in shaping the expression of ethnic identity and its politicised form, nationalism, in line with notions of 'invented tradition' (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983) as well as constructed social realities. Similarly, John Breuilly (1993) points to the central role of state authorities in manipulating nationalism to mobilise the population. This supports his thesis that nationalism is used to create an ideological link between the cultural and the political, or society and the state (whether actual or desired.) Breuilly puts state structures and their need for legitimation at the forefront of his approach to nationalism. Like the present text, he does not claim to explain nationalism,

stating that there “is no valid explanatory theory of nationalism, only a number of ways of describing and comparing various forms nationalist politics have taken” (Breuilly 1993, 338). According to Breuilly (1993, 343), nationalism is simply a product of “the need to make sense of complex social and political arrangements.” He also points to nationalism’s adaptability as an important element of its appeal, and highlights the construction of national stereotypes, histories and enemies as crucial to the success of a nationalist party. Here we encounter the flexibility of nationalist ideology, which is particularly relevant in the context of the cosmopolitan challenge. Kenneth Minogue’s (1967, 31) definition of the nation as “something to be found largely in the aspirations of nationalists” and his emphasis on “legend-making” is also similar to Brass and Breuilly’s view of nationalism as a political construct. One of Minogue’s central contentions about modern nationalism is that “the politics come first, and the national culture is constructed later” (Minogue 1967, 154). He thereby underlines both the power of national symbols to inspire political action and the fact that nationalism is an ideology largely empty of content, less akin “to a theory than to a rhetoric” (Minogue 1967, 153). M. K. Flynn (2000, 30) also contends that “a precise ideological content, outside of a loyalty to the nation, for nationalism *per se* is impossible to establish.” These views recall Michael Freeden’s (1998) definition of nationalism as a ‘thin’ ideology, whose core principle of prioritising the nation needs be supplemented with elements from across the political spectrum. This is a useful insight, which helps to account for the wide variation in nationalist movements. It also suggests that elements of the cosmopolitan challenge can be integrated into nationalist thought.

Paul Brass (1991) claims that symbols and myths are selected and manipulated instrumentally according to their political usefulness, concluding that “[t]he important goal for nationalist movements in this regard is exclusivity, the drive to become the sole political representative of the community” (Brass 1991, 49). Such a reading chimes well with this text’s focus on how the boundaries of the nation are being challenged by the cosmopolitan moment. Responding to Brass’s case study of Muslim nationalism in India, Francis Robinson takes issue with this stance, however, arguing that Islam had a far greater limiting effect on elites and the form of



political mobilisation they adopted than Brass admits. In his critique of Brass, Robinson (1994, 217) acknowledges that Brass does not dismiss the importance of primordial elements altogether. Nevertheless, he emphasises that the influence of primordial factors on nationalist movements should not be underestimated, as these shape not only “the range of legitimate actions for the elite [...] but also form their own apprehensions of what was possible and of what they ought to be trying to achieve.” Breuilly and Brass do recognise that pre-existing factors influence elites to a certain extent. For instance, Breuilly (1993, 344) states that elites “begin with a fund of intellectual assumptions about what society is and how it is organised” (cf. Greenfeld 1993, 15). This suggests that a balanced approach lies somewhere in between a primordialist and a constructivist theory. The debate between Brass and Robinson provides one illustration of the middle way that many scholars seek to navigate between the modernist and primordialist, or ethno-symbolist poles, which marked the starting point of this discussion.

More recent anthologies on the origins of nations revisit the debate between primordialists, modernists and ethno-symbolists, in an explicit attempt to move the discussion forward (Ichijo & Uzelac 2005). However, despite fine-grained attempts to splice questions of origins by distinguishing the sociological (when is a nation?) from the historical (when is *the* nation?), substantially different approaches persist (Ichijo & Uzelac 2005, 5). One advantage of focusing on nationalism as an ideology is that these disputes fade into the background; nations are primarily of interest here as a component of ideologies. For example, if nationalists make a strong case for the primordial origins of their nation, the present text is less concerned with the objective ‘truth’ or the historical accuracy of that claim, than with the role it plays in furthering their cause. Adopting this perspective also escapes what A.D. Smith identifies as the tautology of defining the nation in terms of European and North American modernity, thereby excluding other variants (Smith 2005, 95). Further, it appears that the relative modernity of nationalist ideology – as opposed to nations - is not at issue amongst theorists of nationalism; “Since there is a consensus that nationalism itself is a modern product, any study on nationalism should deal with the nature of modern society in which we live”

(Ichijo & Uzelac 2005, 3-4). Accordingly, the present text proposes to leave behind the fraught terrain of nations' origins to focus instead on the construction of the nation in contemporary politics, and how nation-building is responding to the cosmopolitan challenge. The prolific and influential A.D. Smith also has something to say on this question.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, A.D. Smith modified his long-standing definition of the nation to place less emphasis on the requirement of a mass public culture, a common economy and shared legal rights and duties. Instead, his more recent definition of the nation is "a named community possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs" (Smith 2002, 15). Nevertheless, this too has been criticised for conflating state characteristics, such as common laws, with those of the nation, whilst neglecting the political dimension of self-determination or statehood, which is so central to nationalist ideology. His silence on how "the state seeks to base its legitimacy on the idea that it represents the nation" (Guibernau 2004, 131) or how his definition of pre-modern nations translates to the contemporary era, has also been noted. As a result, many aspects of Smith's work are of limited help in assessing the impact of the cosmopolitan challenge on contemporary nation-building and sub-state nationalism.

Smith's definition of the nation appears to be a checklist of rather vague, objectifying criteria, despite his claims to the contrary (Smith 2004, 205). To consider the definition as only an ideal type - following Smith's own advice - merely introduces further difficulties with classification, and still does not do justice to stateless nations without 'common laws and customs'. Smith is right to point out the importance of antiquity in bolstering claims to the continuity and longevity of the nation. Analyses of contemporary nationalism, however, are most interested in how markers of cultural and historical belonging can function as components of nationalist ideology. Smith is also right to be cautious of those who dismiss today's nationalisms as predominantly closed, backward, homogenising and violent (Smith 2004, 204). Instead, he regards so-called 'nationalist globalisation', understood as an "open, flexible

adaptation to the emerging global economy, but as a consciously national collectivity” (Smith 2004, 205), to be a more accurate way of approaching nationalism in the contemporary context. This view of nationalism and globalisation as potentially complementary forces offers a useful springboard for evaluating the impact of the cosmopolitan challenge on nationalist ideology. In the final analysis, however, the bulk of Smith’s work has been devoted to elucidating the ethnic origins of nations, and so his focus diverges substantially from that of this text.

The deep-rooted nature of national loyalty and its strong mobilising potential led Josep Llobera (1994) to entitle his early book on nationalism ‘The God of Modernity.’ In distinguishing between phases of national consciousness, he demonstrates that the distance between the primordialist and modernist positions is not as great as might be expected; “Nationalism *stricto sensu* is a relatively recent phenomenon, but a rudimentary and restricted national identity existed already in the medieval period” (Llobera 1994, 220). Nevertheless, the extent to which a given ethnic heritage is real, imagined or invented still constitutes an important point of difference among theorists. Another key issue is determining whether intellectual elites, as the driving force behind a nationalist movement, are keepers or creators of the ethnic core. Their penchant for history is certainly not to be considered pointless nostalgia, but rather as a strategic reappraisal and reinterpretation of ethnic heritage for present purposes. It remains to be seen how this compares with forms of contemporary, or neo-nationalism.

Evidently, neo-nationalisms go about mobilising people in quite a different environment to the nineteenth-century variants studied by the likes of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, who give contemporary nationalism short shrift (McCrone 1998, 125). Therefore, an alternative analytical framework is called for, one which incorporates the cosmopolitan challenge. This text does not seek to establish the antiquity or the authenticity of ethnic origins or national legitimating myths. Instead, it accepts Hobsbawm and Ranger’s (1983, 7) view of traditions as invented - whatever the source and pedigree of the components used - and focuses on the contemporary products of that

ideological process. Neither does this text try to explain ‘the rise of nationalism’ as a single phenomenon. Rather, it examines the impact of the cosmopolitan challenge on selected contemporary nationalisms, in all their variety and diversity. Nor does it seek to attribute objective characteristics to the nation or its antecedents. Instead, it analyses nations only as a product of the political ideology of nationalism. This accords with what Peter Alter (1985, 16) calls the simplest definition of the nation, as a “politically-mobilised people.”

### **Neo-nationalism**

Tom Nairn (1981) was among the first to distinguish between different eras of nationalism. He refers to ‘old nationalism’ as the process of nineteenth-century European state-building, which took place in the context of industrial revolution and the breakdown of agrarian society. Nairn’s Marxian standpoint led him to link nationalist movements’ varying forms to the different stages of capitalist development in their respective nations. According to him, ‘new nationalism’ is a product of relative deprivation in an already modern, industrialised environment (Nairn 1981, 128). Nairn’s account of uneven development highlights the relevance of material circumstances to political mobilisation, whilst acknowledging the importance of symbols in cementing national solidarity. He also emphasises that each new manifestation of nationalism is *sui generis* - a product of unique circumstances - whilst retaining the core principles of nationalist ideology at its heart. This is another important insight informing the present analysis. Contemporary nationalism is faced with a very different set of circumstances to its nineteenth century counterparts. There is continuity in the fact that the nation is still “the idea which lies at the core of nationalism” (Greenfeld 1993, 4) and its enduring nature as a ‘thin’ ideology (Freedon 1998), but the definition of that nation has often evolved to meet the cosmopolitan challenge. Nairn points out that the context in which a nationalist movement develops helps to explain the way its ideology is structured. This section surveys several other scholarly approaches to contemporary nationalism before returning to Michael Freedon’s focus on nationalism as an ideology, as laid out in the introductory chapter of this text.

In his book 'Nations against the State', Michael Keating discusses the cases of Scotland, Catalonia and Quebec, three sub-state nations which enjoy substantial autonomy from the British, Spanish and Canadian governments respectively. Keating links sub-state political mobilisation there to the revolution in governance which has further undermined central state power in each case. However, Keating does not believe that the state is in general decline. Instead, he argues that it has been penetrated and destabilised by both supra-state and sub-state factors (Keating 2001, 28). His discussion of 'new nationalisms' in these liberal democracies depicts them as generally civic movements which incorporate a broad social base and are progressive in their discourse. That is, they accept both the concept of limited sovereignty and the existence of multiple identities. For such movements to be successful, evidence of their competence in economic matters is also of utmost importance. Furthermore, he emphasises the role of nationalism in articulating a new political arena and thereby providing a focus for collective action. Given declining loyalty to the existing 'nation-state' construct in the cases he considers, sub-state territories are re-invented as an alternative focus of national identity. The way in which conflicts between the sub-state group and its state-level 'Other' are managed is therefore central to Keating's analysis. It illustrates the effects of today's political environment on the dynamics of sub-state movements, but is also helpful in considering nationalist ideologies and strategies more generally, supporting the case for a fresh approach to contemporary nationalism.

Keating (2001, 28) recognises that nationalism is an ideology but does not explore the implications. Jenkins and Sofos (1996), on the other hand, focus on nationalism as a political, historically specific ideology whilst highlighting, like Keating, the importance of social negotiation in shaping the strategies and interests of collectivities. The nation emerges from their account as a conceptual tool manipulated by nationalist movements in order to legitimate their political project. David McCrone's discussion of 'neo-nationalism', which generally tallies with Keating's, also underlines its flexibility and context-dependency. For instance, McCrone (1998, 129) asserts that in contemporary

nationalism “different ideological elements are mixed and mobilised: right/left; ethnic/civic; past/future; local/global; corporatist/neo-liberal; separatist/autonomist.” This portrayal suggests that nationalism must constantly develop and be ready to adapt its articulation of the link between the individual and the collective. To this extent, contemporary nationalism appears well equipped to respond to the cosmopolitan challenge. Montserrat Guibernau (1999) examines the relationship between sub-state nationalism and the changing global political order by focusing on three issues; the conceptual triad of state, nation and nationalism, the role of intellectuals in promoting nationalism, and the means nationalist movements use to achieve their aims. This corresponds to a concern with the legitimacy, agency and strategy of nationalist ideology. Much like Michael Freeden, whose work is considered further below, Guibernau points to the necessity of supplementing nationalism, as a ‘thin’ ideology, with principles from other ideologies. Although she does not elaborate on this theme, she considers that the “political ideologies to which nationalism is attached are crucial to understanding the significance and character of nationalism in each particular case” (Guibernau 1999, 7).

States’ need for the legitimating function of nationalism has not been eroded by the cosmopolitan challenge. On the contrary, this challenge has only emphasised nationalism’s importance in maintaining the nation-state construct. In stark contrast to Delanty and Kumar’s (2006, 3) view that “the state disengages from the nation” as a result of transnationalism, the present text contends that nation-building is adapting to transnationalism and other aspects of the cosmopolitan challenge in order to retain state legitimacy. As Delanty and Kumar (2006, 3) correctly note, nationalism is indeed “embroiled in the public culture of the democratic state”, and it is important to add that appeals to national solidarity are also central to legitimating authoritarian regimes. Given this recognition of nationalism’s enduring influence, any talk of its retreat – particularly in an age when communism and fascism no longer threaten its dominant position – is perplexing. This may be attributed to competing categorisations, which distinguish nationalism as a well-defined ideology or social movement on the one hand, from its more diffuse presence

as an emotion, an identity or an element of public discourse on the other (Hearn 2006, 6).

Siniša Malešević (2006, 89) divides ideology into what he calls its 'normative' - or ideological - and 'operative' levels, which partly overlap with the characterisation of nationalism as an emotion, identity or discourse. What he aims to show through selected case studies is that the core 'normative' principles of ideologies like political Islam, socialism and liberal democracy tend to be expressed through nationalist rhetoric at the 'operative' level. For instance, he finds the same discourse of national pride, heroism and wartime sacrifice in speeches by British, Iranian and Yugoslav leaders, and in the history texts taught to schoolchildren in all three cases. Although Malešević's analytical focus on ideology is refreshing, it does not equate to the interpretation adopted here. In Michael Freeden's view (1998), discussed in the introduction to this text, Malešević's case studies represent three 'thick' ideologies, which are supplemented and in some cases supplanted by nationalist rhetoric. By contrast, the present text looks at variants of 'thin' nationalist ideology and the peripheral principles and strategies supporting their core commitment to prioritising the nation, ranging from highly inclusive policies to terrorist activities.

As one of a series of recent monographs reviewing nationalism theory debates in the light of globalisation (Day & Thompson 2004; Özkirimli 2005; Hearn 2006), Spencer and Wollman's (2002) contribution to the literature stands out for clearly aligning itself with those "contemporary theorists [who] find nationalism utterly unacceptable, in whatever shape it appears" (Vincent 2002). Their critical stance is explicitly motivated by the wars in Yugoslavia. In their view, national identity is problematic in "that the cohesion it secures is essentially pre-political" (Spencer & Wollman 2002, 201). This assertion fundamentally conflicts with the present approach to nationalism as an inherently political ideology. Spencer and Wollman ultimately recommend more cosmopolitan forms of solidarity as a lesser evil than nationalism, since it "is not difficult to expose what is ideological about these" (Spencer & Wollman 2002, 197) if and when these provide a front for sinister, less than

altruistic agendas. Unfortunately, however, the authors do not look at nationalism in the same light. Taking issue with scholars who see a relatively progressive, inclusive form of nationalism in the likes of Scotland, Quebec and Catalonia (Keating 2001), Spencer and Wollman (2002, 179) contrast statements by leading nationalists with surveys and - in one rather bizarre example - comments by a nationalist leader's wife, in order to show that nationalism must be inherently intolerant. They use opinion poll evidence to the effect that not all respondents supported an inclusive definition of nationalism, in order to assert that inclusive nationalism must be inherently unviable. This seems a rather shaky basis from which to conclude that nationalism equates with chauvinism, because it would also mean that no ideology could be deemed coherent unless a majority of people supported it. To take another example, their basically sound argument that democratic accountability should justify political devolution would have been more convincing had it not been set against the narrow assumption that all nationalism is essentially chauvinistic (Spencer & Wollman 2002, 181). In analysing nationalism, Spencer and Wollman's prejudice against it clouds their reasoning. It is part of their refusal to see the same core principles at work in both banal and 'hot' nationalism, discussed in chapter two of this text.

All of the authors surveyed agree that contemporary nationalism should be approached differently to its nineteenth-century counterparts, and that strategic flexibility in the face of changing state, sub-state and supra-state relationships is a key component of 'neo-nationalism'. They also tend to recognise nationalism as an ideology without exploring the analytical implications. By contrast, the stated aim of David Brown's *Contemporary Nationalism* is to "unravel nationalism by isolating and examining its ideological components" (Brown 2000, 152). He adopts what he calls a constructivist approach to nationalism, defining it as "an ideology offering a distorted perception of reality, containing selective simplifications and elements of myth" (Brown 2000, 1). He then goes on to distinguish civic, ethnocultural and multicultural nationalisms, arguing that the last has recently emerged from the 'unravelling' of the first two. However, Brown also highlights the inter-penetration of these three variants. This evocation of competing



constructions of the nation identifies key aspects of contemporary nationalism, which are explored throughout this text and specifically in chapter two.

As we saw in the introduction, Michael Freeden's account of 'thick' and 'thin' ideologies makes a clear distinction between core and peripheral ideological principles. According to Freeden, nationalism is a thin-centred ideology, as it has few core characteristics beyond prioritising the nation. He cites feminism and environmentalism as other examples of thin ideologies, since they have no inherent principles with which to implement their basic commitment to women's rights and environmental protection respectively. These ideologies therefore require peripheral policies, such as opposition to nuclear fuel, demands for limits to toxic emissions, or measures to promote sexual equality, in order to translate their core goals into a practical strategy. Similarly, today's nationalists must interpret their core goal of prioritising the nation in a way suited to their political environment. Self-determination, therefore, has no precise, immutable form within nationalist ideology, as every nationalist movement combines it with a different set of peripheral principles.

Despite their shared commitment to self-determination, then, nationalist movements interpret this core goal in myriad ways. This proposition helps us understand the wide variations in contemporary nationalist ideology and strategy. The core of a thin-centred ideology like nationalism must be supplemented with elements from other ideologies. Conversely, a thin-centred ideology like nationalism can be used to supplement an otherwise 'thick' ideology lacking in one fundamental area. For example, most governments implicitly accept the nation-state's existing boundaries and use them as the basis for nation-building. Despite being conservative, liberal or socialist first and foremost, governments thereby incorporate a basic element of nationalism into their 'thick' ideologies (Freeden 1998). According to Freeden, core principles are the bare bones of a belief-system, which require fleshing out. A combination of nationalism and cosmopolitanism is therefore thinkable within this conceptual framework.

Freeden describes nationalism as a thin-centred ideology with five core principles; first, the prioritisation of the nation as a key defining framework for

human beings; second, the positive valorisation of the nation; third, the desire to give a political and institutional form to the nation; fourth, the importance of space and time in determining social identity and fifth, a sense of belonging closely bound up with emotion (Freeden 1998, 751-2). The first of these elements sums up nationalism's core commitment to self-determination. However, as Montserrat Guibernau (1996, 63) rightly points out, nationalist ideology "does not indicate the direction to be taken or the methods which should be adopted to achieve [this goal]." Hence the 'chameleon-like' nature of nationalism, a flexible ideology *par excellence*, capable of being moulded to fit every situation. For instance, fascist ideology has sought to prioritise the nation by 'purifying' it of foreign elements. To take a very different example, anti-colonial nationalism has sometimes been combined with communist principles, or has simply sought to create national solidarity on the basis of opposition to the colonial oppressor. Finally, a relatively inclusive form of nationalism is also thinkable, which makes its appeals on the basis of shared and easily attainable citizenship. These examples show how some of nationalism's many variants can be incorporated into Freeden's typology of 'thick' and 'thin' ideologies. As such, this conceptual framework "accounts for the flexibility of nationalist ideologies in application and development" (Flynn 2000, 14).

Freeden's distinction between thick and thin ideologies goes beyond recognising the wide variation in contemporary nationalisms; it also provides a framework for examining their similarities. All forms of contemporary nationalism, including nation-building, share the same core principle of national self-determination. In addition, nation-building also seeks to legitimate the state by equating state and nation (Sutherland 2010, 5). To indicate one's nationality as Italian, Nigerian, Brazilian, Australian or Japanese is to evoke a national construct. This is because every nationalist variant, whether terrorist, democratic or 'banal' (Billig 1995), pursues the political goal of embodying its interpretation of the nation through territory, institutions and in some cases, the national diaspora (Barabantseva & Sutherland 2011). Michael Freeden has shown that the differences between these examples are a result of variations in peripheral principle and strategy, but that the focal point of national mobilisation remains the same. A world of 'nation-states', then, expresses the all-pervasiveness of 'thin' nationalism.

Similarly, A. D. Smith has proposed his own analysis of the 'core doctrine' of nationalism. Two of its basic propositions are the division of the world into nations, on the one hand, and the nation as the source of all political and social power on the other (Smith 1991, 74).

Many aspects of our daily lives are constructed around a concept of the nation which is taken for granted. People everywhere are exposed to this kind of 'banal nationalism' (Billig 1995), which will be examined in more detail in chapter two. The more entrenched the nation-building discourse of a given state, the harder it is to impose an alternative interpretation of the nation. However, to describe 'thin' nationalism as all-pervasive does not lead to the analytical redundancy of the concept. On the contrary, it permits a clearer and more dispassionate categorisation of its possible variants. There is an unjustified tendency to neglect the concept of ideology in studying contemporary nationalism, when ideology can structure the analysis by attending to both flexible and immutable principles. In other words, the strategic element in the definition of ideology allows scope for analysing nationalism's flexibility and pragmatism in responding to the cosmopolitan challenge, whereas its conceptual core provides a touchstone for identifying and categorising very different cases of nationalism. This approach comes into its own when studying post-colonial nationalism.

### **Post-Colonial Nationalism**

Inevitably, imperialism shaped anti-colonial nationalism, which often used the language and concepts of its European oppressors in order to organise resistance (Chatterjee 1993). Schooled in the ways of their 'masters', anti-colonial intellectuals demanded that principles like liberty, equality, fraternity, democracy and self-determination be extended to them. On achieving independence, the preservation of national sovereignty remained paramount to decolonised countries. Indeed, the prospect of regionalisation and globalisation still makes some states nervous about losing autonomy only recently wrested from colonialists. Most Southeast Asian states, for instance, are unwilling to cede sovereignty to their regional grouping, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Sutherland 2009; Narine 2004). Alongside

imperialism's legacy in post-colonial states, it has also had a lasting impact on nation-building in former imperial powers. Decolonisation after World War II entailed the reorganisation of much of Africa and Asia - but also Europe - into nation-states, as former empires like the United Kingdom and France contemplated their loss of global influence (Wilder 2005; Berger 2003, 422).

Benedict Anderson (1991) has proved extremely influential in theorising anti-colonial nationalism, as has his use of concepts like 'print capitalism' and 'homogeneous empty time' to help explain its development. His account of 'Creole pioneers' in the Americas charts the growth of nationalist sentiment amongst the wealthy, landowning classes at the turn of the nineteenth century, before the growth of comparable European movements and, at first, independently of 'print capitalism' (Anderson 1991, 47). This does not correspond to the frustrated intelligentsia Ernest Gellner credits with establishing European nationalism. Rather, these Creole elites were frustrated in another way, namely by their inability to achieve power and status within the bureaucratic hierarchies of the colonial state, which were largely reserved for those born on the Iberian peninsula. According to Anderson, solidarity grew among those sharing the "fatality of trans-Atlantic birth" (Anderson 1991, 57). This gradually extended to as yet illiterate, non-Creole natives, and would be consolidated into the nineteenth century with the rapid spread of 'print capitalism' across the Americas.

Print capitalism is a key concept in Anderson's work. It refers to the explosion in newspaper circulation and novels made possible by printing technology, the move away from Latin texts to publishing in a range of vernaculars, and the capitalist production process itself. Taken together, these elements provided the basis for imagining a community of fellow readers, whose dialects might make "it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation [but who] became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper" (Anderson 1991, 44). For instance, David Marr (1971, 1981) charts the exponential rise in book and newspaper publishing in early twentieth century Vietnam, then a part of French Indochina. The use of a relatively accessible romanised script known as *quoc ngu* - meaning national

language – and the prominence of nationalist themes, were designed to encourage the spread of the national imaginary as part of the anti-colonial struggle. According to Anderson, and with specific reference to Southeast Asia, twentieth century movements also arose - particularly amongst indigenous functionaries and the native intelligentsia - from a comparable sense of frustration to that felt by earlier Creole pioneers in the Americas (Anderson 1991, 126). In the case of these low-level bureaucrats, or clerks, it was the limited educational and employment opportunities afforded by the colonial system which made them hungry for more, and for the freedom to fulfill their potential. According to Anderson (1991, 116), their nationalism came from exposure to European education, and formed the basis of an anti-colonial solidarity, which often rested on ambivalent, colonially-influenced territorial foundations. For instance, the Vietnamese Communist Party, as the leading group in the Vietnamese League for Independence (*Việt Minh*), was originally called the Indochinese Communist Party and remained undecided as to the limits of the Vietnamese nation right up until the 1940s (Goscha 1995).

Although Anderson's work is generally recognised as path-breaking in looking beyond Europe for the origins of nationalism, he has been criticised for applying concepts like print capitalism too readily across the globe, resulting in the neglect of marginal groups and anti-colonial particularities, including the way in which local intelligentsia adapted European models to their own context (Kelly & Kaplan 2001). Anderson does tend to focus on the urban, reading public and pass over certain sections of the population in his broad analytical sweep. For instance, he quotes the opening of a novel by the Filipino nationalist José Rizal to illustrate its appeal to a nationalist audience (Anderson 1991, 27). However, he ignores those *not* invited to the glittering Manilan party evoked in Rizal's book, such as the marginalised minorities living in the hinterlands (Rosaldo 2003, 6). This raises the issue of agency; was anti-colonial nationalism merely an elite, ideological undertaking and if so, how did it become an instrument of mass mobilisation? How did 'the people' interpret and internalise a sense of national belonging? This is one area investigated by so-called 'subaltern scholars', who are concerned with

those rarely given a voice in official histories.

The subaltern has been defined in the Indian context as “the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those we have defined as elite” (Guha, cited in Loomba 1998, 199). Rather than pit coloniser against native, then, this approach introduces a different distinction to help understand the postcolonial legacy. On the one hand, it groups the indigenous entrepreneurs, the bourgeoisie and the bureaucrats at all levels of seniority who adopted an ‘all-India’ perspective. On the other, it places those like the lowest-caste Hindu Dalits, who did not feel represented by India’s postcolonial nationalist discourse. Although there is a danger of merely replacing one simplistic dichotomy with another by essentialising these groups, such as approach does alert us to the enduring influence of “the state’s practice of co-opting the ruling strata of native society and reshaping their traditional authority” (Cheah 2003, 284). This can be observed in both colonised and postcolonial countries. However, even within relatively centralised postcolonial states, these co-opting strategies have varied according to regional particularities (Boone 2003). In post-war Senegal, for instance, the nationalist leader Léopold Senghor sought to accommodate regional elites in order to gain their support and, by extension, that of the local population. Ironically, anti-colonial nationalists might label themselves progressive and democratic – as Senghor’s parties did – whilst relying on a “fusion of elites” (Boone 2003, 60) composed of entrenched aristocratic families and local Islamic marabouts, who always seemed to find a privileged place within the evolving hierarchies of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial rule.

The cultural and postcolonial theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak warns that the subaltern voice cannot be captured or recorded as a coherent whole, like some sort of authentic ethnic experience (Leonard 2005, 106). This approach has close affinities with poststructuralist theories, which highlight the inconsistencies and fissures in discourse that prevent any actual closure or completeness (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Poststructuralism has been criticised, perhaps unfairly, for failing to move beyond this key proposition to develop a

critical response to colonialism, globalisation, transnationalism and revolutionary nationalism (Leonard 2005, 2). By contrast, such concerns are central to postcolonial theory, which extends to investigations of enduring colonial structures and legacies, and their contribution to current global inequalities that might be considered 'neo-colonial.' As such, postcolonial theory promises insights which are highly relevant to contemporary nationalism and the cosmopolitan challenge.

Spivak (2008, 6) argues that any search for the essence of the subaltern subject will be in vain, but instead sees critical potential in recognising both the coloniser and colonised as heterogeneous and mutually constitutive. For example, dominant modes of thought are often shaped by paradigms emanating from Western academia, so that postcolonial scholars themselves may be unwittingly perpetuating imperial ideas (Leonard 2005, 108). This leads us to the notion of hybridity, which suggests an interdependence rather than a dichotomy, or strict opposition, between coloniser and colonised. Often associated with the theorist Homi Bhabha (1990a; 1990b), the concept of hybridity is useful in understanding how nations are shaped through relationships, rather than representing any essential characteristics. For instance, the coloniser's sense of superiority can only exist in relation to the inferiority imputed to the colonised 'Other'. Similarly, the bond of national belonging often derives from a shared, negative rejection of the outsider, rather than a positive and independent celebration of oneness. According to Bhabha (1990a, 296), however, even this source of solidarity has been ambivalent amongst colonisers. The conflicting characteristics they have attributed to the 'native' – innocent yet threatening, savage yet servile, primitive yet calculating – mean that we cannot begin to paint a clear picture of either the colonised or their colonisers (Leonard 2005, 128). In sum, we should not seek to essentialise postcolonial communities or generalise about any shared characteristics.

Bhabha shows that the identities which colonisers themselves construct and propagate are necessarily unstable, thereby providing an opportunity for the oppressed and disempowered to undermine and resist those identities which

paint them as inferior. The concept of hybridity thus breaks down the division between 'them' and 'us' by pointing to the relativity of national, racial and ethnic categories, leaving the way open for the possibility of transnational alternatives in the contemporary arena (Bhabha 1990b; Leonard 2005, 134). Again, this suggests that some form of cosmopolitan nationalism is thinkable. Nevertheless, Bhabha and Comaroff also points to a conservative backlash against this trend;

Current 'origins' of nationalism and fundamentalism have everything to do with an anxiety provoked by the complex process of cultural hybridization that challenges atavistic definitions. Such hybridization is as much part of the national scene as it is a global phenomenon [but] there is also the pressure to create a kind of coercive, lethal closure" (Bhabha & Comaroff 2002, 27).

This highlights the problems inherent in denying the nation's unfixity and ambivalence, and aiming for closure by positing an ancient, homogenous nation and unquestioningly anticipating its future progress and preservation as a unitary whole. Ironically, however, Bhabha's critics point out that he presents hybridity as a universal phenomenon, thereby adopting precisely the universalising tendencies which he seeks to question (Leonard 2005; Cheah 2003). The all-pervasiveness of nationalism also makes it a universal organising principle because it purports to associate every human being with a nation. Indeed, "the putative antithesis between cosmopolitan universalism and nationalist particularism misleadingly obscures the fact that both philosophical nationalism and cosmopolitanism articulate universal institutional models" (Cheah 2003, 2). Nationalism's all-pervasiveness has also been expressed through Benedict Anderson's conception of 'homogeneous, empty time'. Understood as people's ability to imagine the "steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity" (Anderson 1991, 26) of their compatriots, and members of other nations beyond their own, this provides the basis for appeals to members of the nation as an "imagined community." According to Anderson, it is also at the root of organic metaphors depicting the nation's progress towards the future as a bounded, interconnected whole.

Asserting the universality of nationalism's foundations risks denying nation-builders and nationalist movements any originality or independence in the way they imagine the national community. In response, Partha Chatterjee, both an



admirer and a critic of Anderson's work, has sought to trace anti-colonial nationalism's subtle blend of borrowing and differentiation through the case of Bengal. Chatterjee (1996, 217) describes a unique and spiritual cultural nationalism which "creates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society well before it begins its political battle with the imperial power." According to Chatterjee, this cultural domain embodied the originality of Indian nationalism. It was a key site of resistance outside of the state apparatus and independent of the more derivative political nationalism, which both had pervasive colonial associations. Thus, anti-colonial nationalism did not merely extend a Western ideology into new lands, but adapted it. Importantly, this created a realm outwith the reach of the state in which to develop non-Western conceptions of literature, the family, gender roles and other aspects of society "that would be modern and at the same time recognizably Indian" (Chatterjee 1996, 220).

A further interesting perspective on colonialism and nationalism comes from Shalini Puri (2004), who points out that Caribbean nationalists could never draw on a purist, primordial sense of nationhood. This leads her to question why hybridity and nation-building should ever be considered mutually exclusive in the first place. Instead, Puri explores so-called 'hybrid nationalisms', focusing on transnationalism as a way of "studying aspects of human experience and societies which cannot be contained within the nation-state" (Puri 2004, 6). She rejects post-nationalism, however, which purports to transcend the nation-state altogether. According to Puri, focusing on transnational flows, from migrant labour to "five-star tourists" (Puri 2004, 24), may be one way of imagining the nation anew. Although she does not consider nationalism as an ideology, preferring its Andersonian gloss as a framework for political activity and emotional attachment (Anderson 1991, 5), Puri's critique of the post-nationalist position is highly relevant to the present text. It draws our attention to the wide variety of more or less empowering hybrid identities, and more or less oppressive nationalisms. Though we should be wary of essentialising the nation, it may yet be imaginable in a more inclusive form, one more clearly attuned to transnationalism, diaspora and other aspects of the cosmopolitan challenge. One possible approach, which is

formulated explicitly in terms of the nation, contrasts territorially and monolingually defined nations “imposed by subordinating regions and ethnicities within more or less arbitrarily delimited spaces” with new forms of transterritorial and multilingual nations linked to the logics of markets and globalisation (García Canclini 1995, 29). This suggests that focusing on the marginalisation of minorities, such as is championed by subaltern scholars, need not entail jettisoning the nation-state construct in its entirety. Indeed, demonstrating an awareness of the enduring influence of the nation-state in dispensing privilege and status, and the diverse ways in which national borders are crossed, are useful starting points for conceptualising the heterogeneous, hybrid nationalisms that can arise as a result of the cosmopolitan challenge.

Both Shalini Puri and Partha Chatterjee are concerned by the universalism implied in associating nationalism with a shared experience of (Western) capitalist modernity, privileging Enlightenment values of rationality, secularism and a belief in science and the state. For instance, Anderson’s (1991, 26) understanding of ‘homogeneous, empty time’ is premised on the decline of pre-modern perspectives, so that alternative interpretations of time and place tend to be dismissed as remnants of a bygone age. However, Chatterjee (2005) points out that people today draw on many heterogeneous ways of constructing and experiencing the nation, which cannot be dismissed as atavistic or invalid simply because they do not fit the Enlightenment mould. He also cautions against Anderson’s rather utopian depiction of the nation as promoting horizontal bonds of solidarity, when nation-building often goes hand in hand with enduring inequality. For instance, the formal, legal equality of Dalits (once termed Untouchables) as Indian citizens exists alongside continued caste discrimination, decades after India’s independence (Chatterjee 2005, 939).

Similarly to Chatterjee, John Kelly (1998, 844) criticises Anderson’s view of nations as “symmetrical units of imagined, communal self-love”, because this suggests a horizontal leveling of individuals through notions of national solidarity and comradeship, which is belied by the hierarchies that pervaded

colonial rule and often persisted thereafter. Such a view can also detract attention from the upheaval of diasporic movements, and cases in which diasporas are denied a role in nation-building. For example, Kelly cites the case of Indo-Fijians, which is discussed further in chapter four. Brought by British colonialists to the Pacific Islands as indentured labourers in the nineteenth century, their descendants still remain subordinate to the principle of ethnic Fijian paramountcy. Kelly also charges Anderson with anachronistically projecting back into history a picture of a world divided into nations - arguing that this organising principle can really only be traced to the creation of the United Nations following World War II - and should not stand in the way of seeking a “clearer understanding of the asymmetries in global flows” (Kelly 1998, 869). According to Kelly, the neatly delineated nation-states we see represented on political maps or embodied around negotiating tables do not correspond to people’s lived experience. They are part of “an international normative order [...] based on sovereign nation-states” (Delanty 2006, 363), but as Chatterjee (2005, 928) puts it, this “is not located anywhere in real space—it is utopian.”

Although this text is chiefly concerned with nationalism as a political ideology, and the way in which nationalists mobilise cultural symbols, it must also be alive to how these symbols shape and are shaped by people’s way of life, and this is discussed further in chapter two. Postcolonial theory is but one strand of a multifaceted approach to cultural nationalism, which looks beyond the “one-sided transmission of ideology from above [towards] an on-going consumption (and therefore reproduction) of culture in which various sections of the population participate” (Yoshino 1999, 2). These questions continue to be particularly relevant in postcolonial societies, which are confronted both with the legacy of the Western ‘Other’ and the impact of globalisation. The postcolonial legacy includes the cultural continuity, or ‘path dependency’, of colonial relationships, which still colour international relations, trading regimes and development flows to this day (Bebbington & Kothari 2006, 852). One example is France’s cultural and military engagement in many of its former African colonies, which are also members of the language alliance known as *Francophonie*. Similarly, the Commonwealth brings together many former

British colonies, and Portugal played an important part in the international intervention leading up to the independence of its former colony of East Timor from Indonesia in 2002 (Burke & McDonald 2007, 13).

In the British context, the “unfinished contestations” (Clifford 1997, 3) of decolonisation can be observed in the way former colonial officials in Africa, India and elsewhere were redeployed in UK government development agencies. Not only did this degree of continuity affect nation-building in post-independence states, but as Uma Kothari (2006) has shown, it also helped perpetuate a rather stereotypical view of the United Kingdom (particularly England) amongst its expatriates. An “imagined geography” of England “was sustained and reproduced as it circulated within colonial networks” (Bebbington & Kothari 2006, 857), upheld through ritual and reverence. This was a deterritorialised depiction of the nation, which existed outside the ‘home turf’ in the imaginations of these expatriate citizens, illustrating how the postcolonial legacy has resonance for former colonising countries as well as those colonised. In the words of one expatriate; “they weren’t living their nationalism; it was all in the head, it was a myth” (cited in Kothari 2006, 245). It could well be argued that the nation is no less mythical at home than away, especially if we understand a myth as “an abbreviated world outlook, an ideology in miniature” (Nothnagle 1993, 6). The notion of expatriates ‘living their nationalism’ highlights the strong assumption that the nation is realised through a close bond with and, ideally, proximity to the homeland. Yet as will be shown, transnationalism and the cosmopolitan challenge more generally are undermining that assumption (Barabantseva & Sutherland 2011).

There is a long-standing tendency in the media and political discourse for the outsider, the immigrant, or the foreigner to be constructed as somehow threatening, thereby encouraging members of a national community to close ranks in order to preserve jobs, traditions, or some vague notion of national heritage (Stratton & Ang 1994). To use Edward Saïd’s terminology, this is a product of ‘imaginative geographies’, which create difference through distance (Gregory 2004, 17). The post-colonial moment, on the other hand, disrupts the neat dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’ by excavating the colonial past in

order to uncover its continuing influence over the present (Gregory 2004, 7). The cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1997, 24) expresses this vividly with reference to his own emigration from Jamaica to England; “There is a tremendous paradox here which I cannot help relishing myself; that in the very moment when Britain finally convinced itself it had to decolonise, it had to get rid of them, we all came back home. As they hauled down the flag, we got on the banana boat and sailed right into London.”

The situation faced by those nation-states which successively gained independence in the post-war era prefigured the cosmopolitan challenge. Their self-determination was internationalised from the outset, influenced by enduring economic ties with the former imperial power, bureaucratic legacies, cultural accretions and often a privileged path for emigration. Catapulted into a globalising world where transnational exchanges and localised adaptation were intensifying as never before, governments still had to meet the challenge of nation-building; “Postcolonies, even where they did constitute more or less integrated nation-states, could seldom achieve the autonomy promised by nationalist ideology precisely because they confronted global capitalist markets and unequal terms of trade” (Calhoun 2007, 18). Amidst a confusion of intermingling cultures, they had to construct a sense of national unity and solidarity. In so doing, nation-builders used nationalist symbolism to squeeze ethnic, cultural and religious diversity into a common crucible of national belonging. Whether privileging the “dominant *ethnie*” (Smith 1995, 106), as in Vietnam or Thailand, or espousing an official multiculturalism, as in Malaysia or Singapore, ethnic categories often originating in colonial times were imposed to help govern a clearly delimited people and pursue nation-state legitimacy within defined territorial borders (Anderson 1991, 168). But the difficulties of nation-building have not abated in the contemporary era, quite to the contrary. Indeed, “the difficulty of creating national cultures that might preserve, indeed nourish internal differences has emerged as a major issue in our time” (Loomba 1998, 203).

The preceding discussion of anti-colonial and postcolonial nationalism has questioned the view of nationalism as a Western export to the colonies. However, as Gayatri Spivak (2008, 1) has pointed out, we should also be wary of trying to capture the subaltern voice as somehow unsullied by the colonial associations of certain indigenous elites. Rather, we should take note of these colonial associations, their lasting effects on postcolonial nation-building and, by extension, their influence on sub-state ethnic and nationalist movements. This applies both to postcolonial states and former colonising countries, whose own national identities continue to be influenced by decolonisation. Most obviously, their approach to citizenship and nation-building has been strongly affected by migration and diaspora from former colonies. Finally, students and scholars of nationalism would do well to remind themselves that as citizens of any given nation-state, and perhaps also as patriots, migrants, members of a diaspora or sympathisers with sub-state movements, they are also subjected to nationalist ideology.

## **Conclusion**

Analysing nations as 'imaginative geographies' or 'imagined communities' acknowledges the creative licence inherent in every nationalist ideology. In turn, placing contemporary nationalism and nation-building in the context of the cosmopolitan challenge points to the transnational flows which complicate neatly delineated accounts of national territory, history and heritage. Just as young children learn to categorise objects differently according to the rules of their respective mother tongue, so the "encapsulated" (Lieberman 2003, 6) study of, say, French history or Uruguayan geography serves to consolidate these countries' borders. This is a form of educational nationalism to rival the methodological nationalism discussed in the introduction to this text (Beck & Sznaider 2010 [2006]). Alternatively, and as Martha Nussbaum (1996) has argued, a curriculum covering cross-border trade, transnational culture and multinational corporations might prompt children to understand the organisation of space rather differently. At an analytical level, at least, we need to "step away from an ethnographic focus on separate, integral cultures [...] to focus on hybrid, cosmopolitan experiences as much as on rooted native ones" (Clifford 1997, 24). Postcolonial theory also teaches us to be

wary of the dominant nation-building narrative and interrogate what it leaves unsaid, or who is being silenced.

Even though political enquiry such as that undertaken here may privilege the analysis of governments, movements, ideologies and global trends, nation-building is not merely a top-down process. Approaching nationalism as an ideology still leaves enormous scope to study its many facets, from particular, individual interpretations (Cohen 1996), through its institutional manifestations, to party political pronouncements. Analysing nationalism as an ideology also helps to show how the nation is constructed and perpetuated through political discourse, international relations and everyday interaction (Billig 1995). In so doing, it becomes clear that linear accounts of national history are skewed, and that seemingly fixed borders of belonging are constructed. The nation is not 'natural', nor does the nation-state represent the inevitable organising principle of political life. Instead, it is the product of constant ideological work to create and maintain what remains a remarkably potent mobilising force. Nationalism's resilience in the face of the cosmopolitan challenge is a result of its flexibility and adaptability, as subsequent chapters will show.

This chapter has argued that theories relating to the emergence of nineteenth century nationalism are of limited use in exploring contemporary responses to the cosmopolitan challenge. Whilst Benedict Anderson's concepts of print capitalism and homogenous empty time have been enormously influential in framing studies of nationalism within the colonial context, they tend to overlook marginalisation and difference, which are some of the very issues pushed to the fore by transnationalism, migration, diaspora, regionalisation and globalisation. Yet the universalising assumptions underlying much 'classical' nationalism theory continue to influence assessments of contemporary nationalism. Alternatively, more recent examinations of contemporary nationalism tend to focus on specific case studies. These pragmatic, empirically-founded approaches offer useful insights into the recent evolution of contemporary nationalisms in response to the cosmopolitan challenge, by addressing the "difficult interplay between their

local and global contexts” (Loomba 1998, 257). Similarly, the following chapters use a series of case studies to illustrate some of the range of nationalist responses to aspects of the cosmopolitan challenge.